GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:268
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2000
FEMALE LITERACY
Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether as pr the UNESCO Report Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal, account for the largest number out of school girls and illiterate women;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard and the suggestions made by UNESCO therein;

(c) the main factors responsible for maximum female illiteracy in India; and

(d) the steps the Government propose to take to improve the position of females?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a): Yes, Sir. The UNESCO Report 'World Education Report 2000' mentions about three large Southern Asia Countries namely Bangladesh, India and Pakistan which estimate to account for nearly 45% of world's illiterate today. Most of these are women.

(b) : It is a fact that majority of illiterate and dropouts/out of school are women and girls. No specific suggestions with reference to the four countries mentioned have been made in the UNESCO ReportHowever, general suggestions have been made which include primary focus areas including the need to step up National effort to reach out to the increasing number of illiterate adult, and need to accelerate access to elementary education for the younger generation so as to cut off the problem at its base;

(c) : The main factor responsible for female illiteracy in India are:

. Gender based inequality.
- Social discrimination and economic exploitation.
- Occupation of girl child in domestic chores.
- Social and traditional restraints.
- Low enrolment of girls in schools.
- Low retention rate and high dropout rate.

(d) The main strategies adopted by the Government for increasing female literacy in the country include:

1. National Literacy Mission for imparting functional literacy.

2. Universalisation of elementary Education, including alternative education.